



Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

This policy applies to:

Senior School

Person responsible for the policy:

Deputy Head (Pastoral and Co-curricular) & Head of PSHE

Review dates:

Last review: Sept 2026

Next review: Sept 2027

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

PSHE Department Ardingly Senior School

1. Rationale and Ethos:

New guidance and regulations have been passed in Parliament and have been in place since September 2020. The new requirements are that all secondary schools teach RSE, and all primary schools teach Relationships Education and recommended that all primary schools have a programme of sex education.

The policy has been produced through consultation with the PSHE Association and between PSHE department heads in both Prep and Senior School. We believe that relationships and sex education is important because we want all our students to develop into responsible, informed, considerate, happy, healthy individuals. That is why, from September 2020, all secondary age children (in both the state and independent sectors) have been taught compulsory Relationships, Sex and Health Education. These subjects are designed to equip students with knowledge to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships as well as preparing them for a successful adult life.

We view the partnership of home and school as vital in providing the context for RSE. Parents and carers need to know that Ardingly's RSE programme will complement their role and support them in the education of their child regarding sex and relationships.

2. Roles and responsibilities

The RSE programme will be led by the Head of PSHE. It will be taught by PSHE subject teachers who are typically teachers of other subjects primarily and will include members of SMT.

3. Legislation (statutory regulation and guidance)

Documents that inform the school's RSE policy include:

Education Act (1996)

Learning and Skills Act (2000)

Education and Inspections Act (2006)

Equality Act (2010),

Supplementary Guidance SRE for the 21st century (2014)

Keeping children safe in education – Statutory safeguarding guidance

Children and Social Work Act (2017)

Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education

Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, and teachers (2025)

4. Aims and objective of RSE:

Relationships and sex education (RSE) is learning about the emotional, social, and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality, and sexual health. It should equip young people with the information, skills, and positive values to have safe, fulfilling relationships and to take responsibility for their sexual health and well-being. Government guidance on RSE states: 'Effective RSE does not encourage early sexual experimentation. It should teach young people to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others. It enables young people to mature, build their confidence and self-esteem and understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity'.

Ardingly College believes that good quality RSE is an entitlement for all young people and must:

- Be accurate and factual, covering a comprehensive range of information about sex, relationships, the law, and sexual health, in order to make informed choices.
- Be positively inclusive in terms of gender, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, culture, age, religion or belief or other life-experience.
- Include the development of skills to support healthy and safe relationships and ensure good communication about these issues; with a particular focus on the importance of consent.
- Promote a critical awareness of the different attitudes and views on sex and relationships within society such as peer norms and those portrayed in the media;
- Provide opportunities for reflection in order to nurture personal values based on mutual respect and care;
- Be part of lifelong learning, continuing throughout life. It should reflect the age and level of the learner;
- Ensure young people are clearly informed of their rights such as how they can access confidential advice and health services within the boundaries of safeguarding;
- Be relevant and meet the needs of young people, and actively involve them as participants, advocates, and evaluators in developing good quality provision;
- Be delivered by competent and confident educators;
- Be provided within a learning environment which is safe for the children, young people and adults involved and based on the principle that prejudice, discrimination and bullying are harmful and unacceptable.

5. Statutory Content including RSE Curriculum

A summary of the content of the statutory curriculum is as follows:

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

- familial relationships
- respectful relationships, including friendships
- the online environment including social media, image sharing and digital reputation
- being safe
- intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

Further details can be found [here](#)

PSHE (in all schools) follows a spiral curriculum which builds upon existing knowledge and allows for knowledge to be developed appropriately for each age group. There are purposeful repetitions of topics across the year groups from the Prep School to Remove to allow for age-specific discussions to take place.

In Year 7 we cover the following topics:

- Transition to the Senior school
- Senior School Ethos and Work skills
- Friendships
- Communicating safely online and digital footprints
- Bullying (online and off)
- Mental Health
- Physical Health
- Puberty and Emotional Changes
- Body Image
- Rights and Responsibilities
- Boundaries
- Consent
- Personal Hygiene and Sleep
- Budgeting

In Year 8 We Cover the Following Topics

- Online concerns (photoshopping, deepfake, media bias, trolls) including online safety
- Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion
- Healthy relationships
- Consent
- Sexting
- Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity
- Drugs and alcohol
- Mental health
- Personal finance

In Shell (Year 9) we cover the following topics:

- Healthy and Unhealthy relationships
- Bullying, including cyberbullying
- Sexual relationships and consent;
- Image sharing and sextploitation
- FGM
- Contraception and STIs
- Mental health and promoting emotional wellbeing;
- Digital resilience; coping strategies;
- Pregnancy and abortion
- Body image (all genders)

- Alcohol.
- Smoking and healthy bodies.
- Managing money
- Careers

In Remove (Year 10) we cover the following topics:

- Sexual Harassment
- Child-on-child abuse
- Coercion, Grooming and Exploitation.
- Healthy and unhealthy relationships.
- Relationships
- Physical and mental health and wellbeing.
- Social media and self-esteem.
- Online Safety
- Pornography
- Risk taking; personal safety in the wider world.
- Gambling
- Binge drinking and alcohol first aid.
- Drugs
- Financial Literacy

In Fifth, there is a programme of RSE and PSHE lessons during the Michaelmas term. The topics are outlined below:

- Wellbeing for life
- Financial literacy
- Relationships, including the impact of pornography and coercive behaviour
- Personal safety

These sessions aim to recap and build on key topics from earlier in the curriculum journey. Fifth students also receive careers guidance from the Enterprise and Employability department.

Lower Sixth students will have a PSHE day in the Michaelmas term which will include workshops and discussions around different topics that will support them as they prepare for life beyond the College.

Separate contraception lessons from our nurses from the School Health & Wellbeing Centre are provided for Shell where they have the opportunity to discuss things related specifically to access to and use of contraception from those in the medical profession.

Resources to teach Sex and Relationships Education include extracts from videos, worksheets, and source material such as articles and websites. Resources are sought from several organisations. These resources are accredited by the PSHE Association as a means of ensuring the suitability and approval of teaching material.

CPD (Continued Professional Development) is available for all subject staff and is encouraged through the PSHE Association.

Dealing with difficult questions

Ground rules are agreed between teachers and students at the start of every year and recapped before sensitive topics. They provide an agreed structure to answering sensitive or difficult questions. This framework promotes the use of an anonymous question box as a distancing technique. Teachers will endeavour to answer questions as honestly as possible but questions they do not feel comfortable answering within the classroom or ones which are not age appropriate and beyond the Key Stage 3 (Shell) and Key Stage 4 (Remove) pupils) objectives, will not be answered or explored. In such instances referrals will be made to the line manager or DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead).

Use of visitors

“Visitors should complement but never substitute or replace planned provision. It is the PSHE co-ordinators and teacher’s responsibility to plan the curriculum and lessons.” (*Sex and Relationship Guidance DfE 0116/2000 P 29 6.11*)

When appropriate, visitors such as the school nurse or approved workshop providers may be involved in the delivery of Sex and Relationships Education, but the main focus will lie with the PSHE team.

Children with Additional Learning Needs

PSHE will be taught in the Universal Classroom Model.

Teaching and resources will be suitable for all student needs wherever possible. All students will have their access to the RSE and PSHE Curriculum facilitated and protected.

6. Consulting Parents

The important lessons parents teach their own children about healthy relationships, looking after themselves and staying safe are respected and valued under this new curriculum.

PSHE teaching at Ardingly will complement and reinforce the lessons taught by parents to their children and do not seek to replace these.

The school is required to consult with parents when developing and renewing policies on Relationships, Sex and Health Education. This policy will be published online and be freely available to anybody. Parents are welcome to express their opinions at any point. The Head of PSHE will write to parents at the beginning of the year outlining the course and will provide opportunity for parental opinion and input via feedback forms.

The right to withdraw a child

Parents or carers CANNOT withdraw a child from Health Education or the Relationships Education element of Relationships and Sex Education because it is important that all children receive this content, covering topics such as friendships and how to stay safe.

If they do not wish their child to take part in some or all the Sex Education lessons delivered between years 7-10, they can ask that they are withdrawn. This covers only the 'mechanical' aspects of sexual relations and contraception and does not include any aspects of relationships or inclusivity. The teaching of FGM is statutory.

A request for withdrawal from Sex Education lessons would need to be made to the Head of the Senior School. The Head teacher will then consider this request and discuss it with parents, and will grant this in all but exceptional circumstances, up until three school terms before a child turns 16. At this age, any child can choose to receive Sex Education if they would like to, and the college would arrange for the student to receive this teaching in one of those three terms (unless there are exceptional circumstances). The science curriculum in all maintained schools also includes content on human development, including reproduction, from which there is no right to withdraw.

- Exemplar materials which will be used in the school's RSE Programme can be seen by parents in school on request to Sam Slater, Head of PSHE.
- Parents will receive prior notification of the RSE Programme to enable them to discuss issues with staff or their own children.

7. Roles and responsibilities

- The PSHE/RSE Head of Department will have overall responsibility for the provision of the programme, for monitoring developments within sex education and for recommending to governors any amendments that are felt necessary and appropriate. The HoD will routinely discuss issues with subject staff and where required, with the DoS and DSL.
- The College's RSE Policy is subject to annual review.

8. Child Protection / Confidentiality

Teachers need to be aware that effective Sex and Relationships Education, which brings an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in a relationship, may lead to disclosure of a child protection issue.

The staff member will inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Head in line with the school's procedures for child protection. A member of staff cannot promise confidentiality if concerns exist.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring is the responsibility of the PSHE and RSE Head of Department. The effectiveness of the RSE programme will be evaluated by assessing children's learning and implementing change if required.

ASSESSMENT:

- There is no statutory requirement for end of key stage assessment in PSHE/RSE
- Assessment will be completed through AFL in class including surveys, quizzes and written work

This policy document will be available to parents via our Parent Portal or by requesting a paper copy from the Head of Department.

Links with other policies

Whole College Safeguarding and Child Protection

Behaviour and Conduct

Acceptable Use of ICT and Mobile Phones and Other Electronic Devices

Anti-Bullying

Cyber-bullying

Equality and Diversity Policy

Careers and Work Experience Policy

Sam Slater

Head of PSHE (Senior School)